



a toxics-free future

www.ipen.org

ipen@ipen.org

International SAICM Implementation Project (ISIP)

In 2010, in an effort to demonstrate SAICM implementation via IPEN Participating Organizations, IPEN launched an International SAICM Implementation Project, also known as ISIP. ISIP aims to mobilize resources for initial enabling activities pertaining to national priorities, in keeping with the work areas set out in the strategic objectives of section IV of the SAICM Overarching Policy Strategy.

In particular, the ISIP supports the Governance objective of SAICM's Overarching Policy Strategy paragraph 26, which calls for enhanced "cooperation on the sound management of chemicals between Governments, the private sector and civil society at the national, regional and global levels."

In addition, ISIP builds on the 2008-2009 Global SAICM Outreach Campaign to raise awareness about SAICM and strengthen collaboration among the public interest, health and labor sectors.

ISIP Objectives

ISIP's four objectives include:

- Promoting the need for sound chemicals management
- Advancing National SAICM Implementation
- Promoting global SAICM implementation by global civil society
- Building capacity among NGOs developing countries and countries with economies in transition

Title of activity: Waste action plan for City of Vrbovec

NGO: Zelena akcija / FoE Croatia

Country: Croatia

Date: April 2011

Elements of SAICM Covered:

Work toward establishing and implementing national action plans with respect to waste minimization and waste disposal, taking into consideration relevant international agreements and by using the cradle-to-cradle and cradle-to-grave approaches (69); Carry out measures that will inform, educate and protect waste handlers and small-scale recyclers from the hazards of handling and recycling chemical waste (72); Promote waste prevention and minimization by encouraging production of reusable/recyclable consumer goods and biodegradable products and developing the infrastructure required (73); Implement demonstration projects on waste minimization and efficient resource management including zero waste demonstration projects (262)

Description of current waste management practices in your country:

The good fact in the Waste Management Plan is that except in Zagreb, no other “mass burn incinerators” in Croatia are planned for the period between 2007 and 2015. The other good point about it is that the unambitious binding targets for recycling presented in the national strategy have been increased.

The bad side of the waste management plan is the serious lack of prevention and recycling measures and complete lack of kitchen biodegradable waste separate collection and composting. The lack of composting is more serious considering the fact that more than 40 percent of whole waste amount is kitchen biodegradable waste. While the plans for 21 regions in Croatia are quite clear and mechanical - biological treatment is chosen to prevent landfilling of biodegradable waste, the City of Zagreb remained the only one to choose “mass burn” incinerator to be its waste management infrastructure investment. According to the latest available data from 2005, Croatia currently has 160000 containers of mixed municipal waste, and only 40 000 containers for separate material collection, and this will be changed by introducing at least 30 new containers for each 1000 people. With the exception of a couple of cities throughout Croatia, no system for separate waste collection by households exists, and waste fees are paid by the household's size, and not by the quantity of waste produced, which would stimulate all the citizens for better recycling.

Description of health and environmental effects of current waste handling practices:

When talking about health and environmental effects of current practices it can be said that bad practices have common effects everywhere in the world. In terms of environmental threats both illegal and legal landfills emit greenhouse gases to the atmosphere (methane, carbon dioxide) and besides GHG landfills emit odour (merkaptanes, benzenes) which is the most recognizable environmental effect but not the most important. Besides irreversibly taking soil, landfills emit leachate – a liquid mixture of waste components, overloaded with heavy metals, POPs and other compounds, which pollutes soil, and in the end it can irreversibly damage underground water sources. The Croatian biggest issue is the fact that the whole shore area is situated on karst, highly permeable rocky underground. Any new landfill or waste treatment facility will have to be carefully planned and in order to preserve the waters Croatia will have to consider avoiding landfilling as quickly as possible.

Description of existing legislation on waste management:

To deal with this problem the Republic of Croatia prepared the National Waste Management Strategy in 2005. As the strategy was brought without any serious public consultation and was available for comments only after being put in the parliament voting procedure, Zelena akcija sent on 4th of October a letter to the Croatian Parliament asking the parliamentarians not to support this strategy because of the serious lack of recycling measures and public consultations.

The Waste Management Strategy will be implemented through a National Waste Management Implementation Plan, which was adopted on 19th July 2007 by the Government of the Republic of Croatia and will be valid for a period of 8 years. The following period until the end of 2011 is crucial for Croatian waste management because local waste management plans should have already been prepared, adopted and harmonized with the National Waste Management Plan, and the implementation should have already started.

Project Outcomes:

Description of the activity conducted to promote waste minimization:

Activity 1: Waste management symposium:

The pilot project started in January 2010 on the Mate Kvesteka street in the town of Vrbovec. 24 households received recycling bags (yellow for dry recyclables and blue color for paper) and home composters. First analyses show that people are willing to recycle if the infrastructure is brought to them. The pilot project ended on 1st of May 2010, and project results have been summarized in the form of a scientific paper concept and submitted to waste management symposium. This pilot project was supported by ISIP phase 1.

The scientific board of the symposium accepted the concept paper, and the whole paper was written and submitted for review. The symposium was held on 25th and 26th of November. Marijan Galovic and Tihana Tarandek Galovic of Zelena akcija were present at the symposium and made a presentation about Vrbovec waste management. We got good feedback about the paper, as it was one of the few positive cases presented at the symposium. The follow up was enriched by a long meeting with Mr. Pat Swords from Irish consultancy company PM. The abstract of the paper has been published in the official book and the full paper was handed out on the official CD of the event.

Activity 2: Waste action plan workshop:

A presentation of the study of the pilot project of separate collection of waste in the city of Vrbovec and the waste action workshop was held on 14th of January in the Hotel Buncic in Vrbovec.

We discussed how the pilot project operated, its results and possibilities for improvement. Marijan Galovic and Tihana Tarandek Galovi of Zelena akcija FoE Croatia held the workshop. The possibilities for improvement of the current system in the city of Vrbovec were collected and wrapped up as a waste action plan. The workshop was attended by 10 participants covering NGOs, citizens, local government and youth council representatives.

Activity 3: Lecture:

On 14th of November Tihana Tarandek Galovi held a lecture on the reuse culture called "The Story of Stuff". The lecture was organized in the National Library of Vrbovec.

With the lecture, in the premises of the library, "Respam collective" exhibition entitled "Picture Books for Adults" was held. The exhibition was prepared by Sanja Tarandek, Peter Ladovi and Ana-Maria Pacek, a student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb. The exhibition consisted of 6 paintings with old children's books characters in modern times – sending the message of worlds overdevelopment.

Tihana Tarandek Galovi, a member of the Association for Environmental Zelena akcija, in her lecture stressed that the culture of reuse encourages civil initiatives to deal with increased need for a sustainable way of living, which includes reusing things, recycling and exiting from the linear production system and creating one that is circular. She also

pointed out that the association of Vrbovec youth organization is one of the few, not just in Vrbovec but in the country, that has shown initiative and adopted the concept of reusing things, which has a humanitarian character, because it is a way that helps disadvantaged people.

Activity 4: Creation of waste action plan:

Marijan Galovic and Tihana Tarandek Galovi of Zelena akcija wrapped up the workshop results in a document named "Waste Action Plan for the city of Vrbovec". Although the city of Vrbovec will need more national and international support in preparation of its waste management plan (its preparing, funding and implementation) we included several actions regardless of the actual feasibility of its implementation. The city of Vrbovec should more proactively be approaching this issue of waste management standards, as the current situation where social issues are draining off the budget money is not sustainable. The document was handed out to the authorities.

Impact on target groups:

Representatives of regional and local authorities:

The result of our previous activities (IPEN phase 1) is the initiation of a "Pay-as-you-throw" system in Vrbovec. In September 2010 the municipal waste company "Komunalac Vrbovec" purchased 4000 standardized waste bins which will be handed out to the citizens free of charge. The PAYT system will be organized with 120 litre bins which we believe is the basic maximum amount of waste that a household can produce. Extra garbage produced will be charged by purchase of standardized bags whose high price will stimulate waste recycling.

The action plan workshop was attended by Mr. Ivan Jajic, vice mayor of Vrbovec who gave good suggestions in the planning session, and offered communication in the future. We believe the city of Vrbovec will use the Action Plan for future fundraising from pre accession funds of European Union.

Local NGOs:

The local NGO Vrbovec youth organization was fully involved in the implementation of this project. They helped us organize the lecture and the workshops where 6 of their members were present, and also contributed to the planning.

Other stakeholders:

A Vrbovec youth council representative was present at the workshop.

Impact on target policies:

The target policy of this project was local waste management plan for the City of Vrbovec. The policy was targeted through the waste action plan and media discussions. The city failed to satisfy the national requirements as every city should have adopted a plan by the end of 2009. Until today – Vrbovec is still breaching national legislation but the officials now have a good starting point as we handed out our Action plan for future usage when preparing the official plan. The authorities also promised a broad public debate about the plan and ongoing communication with the project leaders.

Outreach to stakeholders:

In this activity we did not engage any extra stakeholders as the activity was almost entirely bureaucratic. However, the waste lecture was opened to public and more than 20 citizens were present (only visible from the picture as the VYO was responsible for

the organization and due to their low experience did not collect the signature list). Follow up with the city library was established in order to advance our relationship. They have offered to organize more similar events in the future.

Deliverables, outputs and/or products:

- a) The abstract of the paper has been published in the official book and full paper has been handed out on official CD of the event.
- b) List of participants from waste action plan workshop
- c) 4 newspaper articles mentioning the project (1 more coming in February issue of Vrbovecki list)
- d) Printed Study handed out on action plan workshop
- e) Waste action plan – written form
- f) Photographs of lecture in Vrbovec library
- g) Radio articles.
- h) Presentation from workshop and lecture

Communication efforts:

The project we were dealing with did not attract much local media. However, journalists were invited to the workshop and lecture. A total of 4 articles were published in Vrbovecki List – a newly formed local monthly paper. Another article is expected in the February issue as Tihana Tarandek Galovic gave an abundant interview for the journal. At least 4 appearances were on the local radio Vrbovec (www.radiovrbovec.hr) but we do not possess the clips. The articles can however be found on the website:

<http://radiovrbovec.hr/index.php?id=3298>

<http://www.radiovrbovec.hr/index.php?id=3477>

The next 2 clips are related to the initiation of the Pay-as-you-throw system in Vrbovec, not our project but definitely a result of our previous activities and promotion of the system which can stimulate citizens for separation of waste.

<http://www.radiovrbovec.hr/index.php?id=3354>

SAICM National Focal Point:

Mr. Nenad Lamer
Assistant Minister
Department for Sanitary Inspection
Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
Ksaver 200A
1000 Zagreb
Croatia
Tel: (385 1) 4607 622
Fax: (385 1) 4607 631
Email: nenad.lamer@mzss.hr

NGO Recommendations for next steps:

The recommendations are presented in the waste action plan, while here we are only summarizing the main issues:

- a) The City of Vrbovec will need more national and international support in preparation of its waste management plan (its preparation, funding and implementation)

- b) The city of Vrbovec should more proactively be approaching this issue of waste management standards, as the current situation where social issues are draining off the budget money is not sustainable.

Zelena akcija would like to continue working with the City, but much heavier funding would be necessary in order to complete the goal from the action plan. We would like to suggest a “trilateral partnership” between Zelena akcija, the City of Vrbovec and IPEN for project design in order to gain more EU funding for the waste action plan implementation (or at least part of it).